

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 IO-03 NEA-07 NSC-05 NSCE-00 INR-05

CIAE-00 L-01 PRS-01 EB-03 SP-02 /048 W

----- 029746

R 252335Z NOV 75

FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1379

INFO USUN NEW YORK 1176

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 10381

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR SHUM UNGA

SUBJECT: PROPOSED DIALOGUE ON GOM POLICY TOWARD ZIONISM

REF: MEXICO 10350

1. AS REPORTED REFTEL, MEXDEL VOTE A UNGA IN FAVOR OF "ANTI-ZIONIST" RESOLUTION HAS SPARKED SUBSTANTIAL CONTROVERSY AND NOT A FEW HINTS THAT MEXICO'S TRADITIONAL PRINCIPLES HAD BEEN SACRIFICED IN FAVOR OF "PETRODOLLARS." IN AT LEAST ONE RESPECT, MEXICO MAY ALREADY BE FEELING PINCH FROM ITS POLICY: TOURISM VISITS TO MEXICO BY JEWISH GROUPS FROM U.S. AND ELSEWHERE HAVE ABRUPTLY FALLEN OFF, ACCORDING TO SOME SOURCES --PARTLY AS RESULT OF ZIONISM STANCE AND PARTLY FROM MEXICO'S BROADER IDENTIFICATION WITH ARAB AND THIRD WORLD "ANTI-IMPERIALIST" MANEUVERS. PRESIDENT OF MEXICAN HOTEL ASSOCIATION WARNED NOVEMBER 24 THAT 30,000 TOURIST RESERVATIONS HAD BEEN CANCELED AS RESULT OF UNGA VOTE, NOTING THAT 70 PERCENT OF WINTER TOURISTS WERE JEWISH AND WERE "THOSE WHO STAYED LONGEST AND SPENT MOST."

2. IN STRICT CONFIDENCE, LOCAL REP (SECOND GENERATION MEXICANNATIONAL) OF AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE HAS CONFIRMED
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TO EMBOFF THAT PLAN IS AFOOT TO BRING TOGETHER LEADING

MEXICAN JEWS AND U.S. JEWISH BUSINESSMEN FOR PRIVATE DIALOGUE WITH ECHEVERRIA ON GOM MIDEAST POLICY. ACCORDING TO SOURCE, LOCAL BUSINESSMEN CONCERNED WITH DROP IN TOURISM HERE HAVE PREVAILED UPON EX-PRESIDENT MIGUEL ALEMAN TO ORGANIZE PRIVATE DINNER WITH ECHEVERRIA AT ALEMAN'S HOME TO MAKE KNOWN THEIR CONCERN FOR VITAL TOURISM INDUSTRY AS RESULT OF CURRENT GOM FOREIGN POLICIES. REPORTEDLY, ALEMAN IS NOW TRAVELING TO SEVERAL U.S. CITIES TO EXTEND INVITATIONS TO PARTICIPATE TO SELECTED INFLUENTIAL JEWISH BUSINESSMEN (ALEMAN IS KNOWN TO US TO HAVE DEPARTED FOR U.S. LATE LAST WEEK). DINNER IS SCHEDULED FOR NEXT FRIDAY NIGHT, NOVEMBER 28, AND ECHEVERRIA HAS REPORTEDLY PROMISED TO ATTEND.

3. ANOTHER SOURCE (FROM ALEMAN'S OFFICE) HAS REPORTED TO US THAT GET-TOGETHER IS IN FACT ECHEVERRIA'S OWN IDEA, ADDING THAT THERE IS SOME CONCERN THAT ITS PURPOSE IS TO PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY FOR ECHEVERRIA TO DO SOME KNUCKLERAPPING IN REACTION TO RUMORS HE IS ON THE TAKE FROM THE ARABS. WE EARLIER HAD HEARD THAT ECHEVERRIA INTENDED TO SUMMON INFLUENTIAL MEXICAN JEWS TO LOS PINOS THIS THURSDAY TO HASH OVER GOM POLICY TOWARD ISRAEL, PALESTINE, AND ARABS.

4. AS IF TOURISM PROBLEMS WEREN'T ENOUGH, MEXICANS HAVE LATELY BECOME AWARE OF WHAT SEEMS TO THEM A "BOYCOTT MEXICO" CAMPAIGN IN THE U.S. PROTESTING GOM STANCE ON MIDDLE EAST. PRESS HERE HAS CARRIED REPORTS OF LARGE ADS IN MAJOR U.S. PAPERS AS WELL AS POSTERS AND FLYERS URGING AMERICANS NOT TO VISIT "UNFRIENDLY" MEXICO NOR BUY ITS PRODUCTS. NOT UNREASONABLY, SOME MEXICANS HAVE ALSO JUMPED TO CONCLUSION THAT RECENT PROTECTIVE ECONOMIC MOVES BY USG SUCH AS THOSE PROTESTED BY AMB. DE OLLOQUI WERE SOMEHOW RELATED TO SAME BOYCOTT CAMPAIGN. EFFECTS HERE HAVE BEEN COMPLEX (AND PERHAPS ILLOGICAL) JEWISH COMMUNITY LEADERS HAVE BEEN WARNED BY FRIENDS THAT NATIONAL ECONOMIC INTERESTS WOULD HAVE TO BE PLACED AHEAD OF PRO-ISRAELI SYMPATHIES IN FACE OF A HURT-MEXICO CAMPAIGN IN U.S.

5. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH MEXICO'S JEWISH COMMUNITY IS NATURALLY A BIT PARANOID OVER POSSIBILITY THAT ZIONISM CONTROVERSY COULD PRODUCE ANTI-SEMITIC CRACKDOWN OF SOME SORT, CONFIDENTIAL

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EMBASSY DISCOUNTS THIS POSSIBILITY. TO THE CONTRARY, IN A COUNTRY WHICH HAS TRADITIONALLY PRIDED ITSELF ON RACIAL TOLERANCE, WE BELIEVE ECHEVERRIA HAS CAUGHT HIMSELF IN EMBARRASSING BIND. LACK OF OUTSPOKEN SUPPORT FOR UNGA VOTE IN PUBLIC PRINT COULD NOT HAVE ESCAPED PRESIDENT'S NOTICE, AND POTENTIAL (AND ACTUAL) SLUMP IN TOURIST TRADE FROM U.S. MAY NOW APPEAR MORE SIGNIFICANT TO HIM THAN ELUSIVE ARAB "PETRODOLLARS." OUR ESTIMATE IS THAT IF "DIALOGUE"

OCCURS ECHEVERRIA WILL GIVE JEWISH LEADERS SOFT-SOAP
TREATMENT SO FAMILIAR TO US IN RECENT YEARS, PROFESSING
CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL'S SURVIVAL, PROMISING FULLEST
RACIAL/RELIGIOUS FREEDOM FOR JEWS IN MEXICO, AND PROTESTING
THAT MEXICO'S PURSUIT OF GREATER INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC
"JUSTICE" COMPELLED IT TO ALIGN WITH SOME UNSAVORY THIRD
WORLD CHARACTERS WHILE SEEKING TO MODERATE THEIR BEHAVIOR.
CALDERHEAD

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: UNGA RESOLUTIONS, ZIONISM, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 NOV 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ShawDG
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975MEXICO10381
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750411-0508
From: MEXICO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751112/aaaaajzv.tel
Line Count: 123
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: 75 MEXICO 10350
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 AUG 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <12 AUG 2003 by izenbei0>; APPROVED <10 NOV 2003 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PROPOSED DIALOGUE ON GOM POLICY TOWARD ZIONISM
TAGS: PFOR, SHUM, UNGA
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006